

main a translation of a report presented to the Mexican Congress by a Minister in high office who was also a subsidised ally of the mining companies. Disraeli, however, contributed some explanatory notes, and introduced the Minister in question in a memoir which has no appearance- of doing less than justice to the merits of its subject or the other Mexican statesmen of the day. 'Inconsiderate ignorance,' it is true, was 'daily stigmatising them as weak and unprincipled adventurers.' But 'if they be not pure and practical patriots,' exclaims the indignant biographer in one of his roundest periods, 'we know not what names should be inscribed on the illustrious scroll of national gratitude.'

The brilliant pen of the young pamphleteer, whatever else it may have accomplished, did not avail, as we have seen, to save his private speculations from disaster. He was still undismayed; but as the fortune which was to serve as a main instrument of his ambition had eluded his grasp, it became necessary to frame some new combination, and the materials were soon discovered. In his preoccupation with finance Disraeli had not forgotten nor been forgotten by his old friend John Murray. He seems even to have persuaded Murray into joining him in a speculation in South American shares; and as the mining pamphlets could hardly be regarded as a contribution to literature, Murray in his turn provided his young ally with another opportunity of making an appearance as an author.¹ Having decided to issue for English readers a *Life of Paul Jones*, based on the same material as the *Life* by Sherburne, which was on the eve of publication in the United States, Murray entrusted the manuscript to young Disraeli and requested him to prepare it for the press. Immersed in what he no doubt thought was more important business, the editor seems to have discharged his duty in a rather